

Serial No. 10/728,801
Filed: December 8, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the above application in view of the below remarks is requested.

In the Office Action, the Patent Office rejected claims 1 to 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Nagahara et al. (JP 2000-181069). This rejection is traversed.

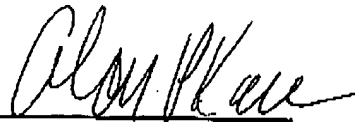
Applicants point out that the Nagahara et al. document is the same document to which the present application, as well as the parent US patent application, Serial No. 09/806,852, claimed foreign priority, through a PCT International Application, PCT/JP99/05498. See applicants' Declaration and Power of Attorney for Patent Application filed in the instant application. Applicants note that the parent US patent application was a National Stage patent application from the PCT International Application and was incorporated by reference into the present application.

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Given the above, applicants are of the opinion that the rejection is not proper and should be withdrawn.

Applicants submit that the concerns of the Patent Office have been addressed. Withdrawal of the rejections and issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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